

final environmental impact statement
wilderness recommendation



NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE / ALASKA

ANILCA. The lands and waters recommended for addition were Alsek Lake, Deception Hills, Muir Inlet, and Wachusett Inlet. The waters recommended in the GMP for deletion from wilderness were Beardslee Islands, Hugh Miller Inlet, and Dundas Bay.

Based on the GMP wilderness suitability review, more precise acreage figures, and subsequent modifications in wilderness suitability criteria, 78,520 acres are now considered suitable for wilderness addition, and all 53,270 acres of wilderness waters are being reevaluated for retention as wilderness or possible deletion from the system. All these lands and waters meet the criteria for designation as defined in the 1964 Wilderness Act and the NPS policies for wilderness areas. There are no mining claims, no nonfederal lands or waters, and no lands or waters selected by regional corporations for conveyance to private ownership within the study area. Nonfederal lands, including conveyed native allotments, are not eligible for wilderness designation.

Most of the wilderness-suitable nondesignated lands and waters within Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve are currently managed by the Park Service so as not to impair their wilderness values. Any lands that are designated as wilderness under the proposed action or alternatives will be additionally protected because no development proposals beyond those authorized in ANILCA and the Wilderness Act could be considered without congressional action to reverse wilderness designation.

The following map shows the lands and waters of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve that are suitable for wilderness designation. It also shows the waters that are already designated as wilderness and under consideration for possible deletion from the national wilderness preservation system. These two categories make up the 131,790-acre study area for this DEIS.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

The lands and waters considered for wilderness designation are Muir Inlet, Wachusett Inlet, Alsek Lake, an unnamed island adjacent to Blue Mouse Cove, Cenotaph Island, two parcels of land in the vicinity of Gateway Knob, the Deception Hills east of the Doame River, and lands between the Doame River and the East Alsek River. In addition the study includes all of the waters currently included in wilderness: the Beardslee Islands, Adams Inlet, Rendu Inlet, Hugh Miller Inlet, Scidmore Bay, Charpentier Inlet, and Dundas Bay. Various possible combinations of these areas are represented by alternatives 2 (the proposed action), 3, 4, and 5. Table 1 summarizes the current status, existing uses, potential conflicts, accessibility, wilderness values, and resource values of all the lands and waters in the study area.

These lands and waters are scattered throughout Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. As a unit the park/preserve encompasses spectacular scenery and abundant wildlife spread over a wide range of Alaska coastal habitat types. Sixteen massive tidewater glaciers flow down from the

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

This section describes the proposed action and four alternatives for possible wilderness designation at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. It also includes a map of areas considered under each alternative, a scenario of possible developments and uses under each alternative, and a table summarizing these scenarios. The possible development and use scenarios are based on the wilderness areas being considered under the alternatives, proposals in the General Management Plan, activities and developments identified by the public during the scoping process (see the "Consultation and Coordination" section for scoping information), potential activities or developments identified in ANILCA, and projections by the National Park Service based on current trends in visitor use. The scenarios are not NPS proposals; rather, they are our best professional judgments of the developments and uses that might occur in response to public interests and management needs in the next 30-40 years based on trends projected under each alternative to meet the objectives of that alternative. The scenarios have been developed for the purpose of analyzing possible environmental impacts in the FEIS to meet the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. A summary comparison of environmental impacts is presented at the end of the section.

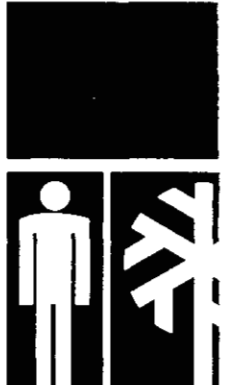
WILDERNESS SUITABILITY

ANILCA 202(1) expanded Glacier Bay National Monument by 523,000 acres to a total of 3,243,000 acres and created Glacier Bay National Preserve encompassing about 57,000 acres of public land. Further, Glacier Bay National Monument was redesignated as Glacier Bay National Park. Collectively, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve now contain about 3,300,000 acres.

ANILCA 701(3) designated 2,700,000 acres of Glacier Bay National Park as wilderness, to be managed in accordance with provisions of the 1964 Wilderness Act. This accounted for almost all the land area within the park. The Bartlett Cove developed area, Blue Mouse Cove, Cenotaph Island, and an area on the south shore of Alsek Lake were the major exceptions. None of the preserve lands were designated as wilderness. Five marine areas were also designated as wilderness--the Beardslee Islands, Adams Inlet, Rendu Inlet, Hugh Miller Inlet/Scidmore Bay/Charpentier Inlet, and the north and west arms and narrows of Dundas Bay. Section 1110 of ANILCA allows "the use of snowmachines, . . . motorboats, airplanes, and nonmotorized surface transportation" on public lands designated as wilderness. These uses are subject to reasonable regulation "to protect natural and other values."

The approved 1984 General Management Plan (GMP) for the park/preserve recommended a variety of lands and waters totaling 63,300 acres for addition to the designated wilderness and also recommended the deletion from wilderness of 27,470 acres of waters previously designated under

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NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE / ALASKA

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

This section describes the proposed action and three alternatives for possible wilderness designation at Katmai National Park and Preserve. It also includes a map of lands considered for designation under each alternative, a scenario of possible developments and uses under each alternative, and a table summarizing those scenarios. The possible development and use scenarios are based on characteristics of the wilderness areas being considered under the alternatives, proposals in the General Management Plan, activities and facilities identified by the public during the scoping process (see the "Consultation and Coordination" section for scoping information), potential activities or developments identified in ANILCA, and projections by the Park Service based on current trends in visitor use. Except for administrative facilities, the scenarios are not National Park Service proposals; rather, they are our best professional judgments of the developments and uses that might occur in response to public interests and management needs in the next 30-40 years based on trends projected under each alternative to meet the needs of that alternative. The scenarios have been developed for the purpose of analyzing possible environmental impacts in the FEIS to meet the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. A summary comparison of environmental impacts is presented at the end of the section.

WILDERNESS SUITABILITY

Of the 4,124,075 acres in Katmai National Park and Preserve, approximately 3,473,000 acres in the park were designated as wilderness by ANILCA, sec. 701. This area generally covers the southern three-quarters of the park and includes the Aleutian Range, the major portion of the lake and river country west of the mountains, and the rugged coastal mountains and Pacific coastline to the east. More accurate measurements since 1980 have resulted in a current wilderness acreage figure for the park/preserve of 3,384,358 acres (or 82 percent of the total acreage).

The 1986 General Management Plan included a wilderness suitability review, which determined that 491,807 acres were suitable for wilderness designation. Based on that review and subsequent changes in criteria for suitability, 643,448 acres, or approximately 16 percent of the park/preserve, have been determined to be technically suitable for wilderness (see Study Area map). These lands meet the criteria for designation as defined in the 1964 Wilderness Act and NPS policies for wilderness areas.

Several areas were determined to be not eligible for wilderness designation because of existing nonfederal landownership or development. These include 79,269 acres of the beds of navigable waters that are owned by the state of Alaska (including Kukaklek and Nonvianuk lakes, Swikshak Lagoon, and the Alagnak, Naknek, and Nonvianuk rivers),

12,240 acres of existing private lands (up to 37 native allotments and small tracts and native village corporation land west of Naknek Lake; it is not expected that any of these lands would revert to federal ownership), 4,662 acres of NPS development (Grosvenor Camp, Brooks Camp, and the road to the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes), and 98 acres that are privately owned and are occupied by three rustic lodges and related facilities (at Nonvianuk, Kulik, and Battle lakes).

The area determined to be suitable for wilderness includes 28,547 acres of federally owned lands that are under application for native allotments or have been selected by native regional or village corporations under ANCSA but have not been conveyed. These lands are technically suitable for wilderness designation because they are undeveloped and possess important wilderness character and values, and they are included in the areas considered for wilderness in the three action alternatives. Approximately 28,097 acres of land have been selected by native regional and village corporations. These lands lie around the west end of Kukaklek Lake, and most of them are expected to remain in federal ownership because of overselections of lands by the corporations and other selected lands that may be preferred by the corporations. Four small tracts (450 acres total) are expected to be conveyed to native allottees. If these lands are conveyed, their management, development, and use will be determined by the allotment holders; any proposals for such lands are unknown at the present time. Only lands that are wholly federally owned can be designated wilderness. Any of the above selected lands that are not conveyed will remain in federal ownership and will be considered for wilderness designation.

The area determined to be technically suitable for wilderness also includes 57,000 acres of nonfederal land. This land consists of approximately 49,539 acres of state land on the north shore of the park overlooking Kamishak Bay, 6,429 acres around the west end of Kukaklek Lake and owned by the Igiugig Village Corporation, 940 acres in the northeast corner of the preserve and owned by the Bristol Bay Native Corporation, a 60-acre lode mining claim group north of Battle Lake, 21 acres in three parcels along the Pacific coast and owned by the Orthodox Church in America, and 11 acres in one native allotment northwest of Naknek Lake.

The state lands on Kamishak Bay (49,539 acres) have been tentatively designated by the state for resource management, wildlife habitat, and public recreation uses. Preliminary negotiations have taken place between the National Park Service and Alaska to exchange these lands; however, the state cannot dispose of these lands until the classification has been completed. Lands owned by the Igiugig Village Corporation around the west end of Kukaklek Lake (6,429 acres) are generally treeless, windswept, and rocky. These lands are currently undeveloped, and they may be exchanged for other lands outside the park/preserve. A small rustic lodge could be developed on them. Lands in the northeast corner of the preserve and owned by the Bristol Bay Native Corporation (940 acres) are high on a mountain divide and are only a small part of a native-owned tract lying outside the preserve. No development is anticipated here because of the nature of the land. The validity of the



Study Area / Suitable for Wilderness

Not Suitable for Wilderness

Existing Wilderness

Park Boundary

Preserve Boundary

Land Selections—native and state,
includes subsurface and surface estates

Native- and State-Owned Lands—
includes subsurface and surface estates

Small Tract Entries—includes native allotments,
homesteads, T&Ms, etc.

X Mining Claims

Note: Nonfederal lands within the study area would
not be eligible for wilderness designation unless
acquired by the federal government.



STUDY AREA



KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE / ALASKA
U.S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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